

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-7 are pending in the present application.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowance of claim 7.

In addition, Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended to Applicants' attorney during the telephone interview conducted on June 5, 2003. During the interview the Tada et al. reference, as well as the amendments to independent claim 1 were discussed, and an agreement was reached that the amendments to claim 1 made herein patentably distinguish over the Tada et al. reference.

The objection to claim 1 is noted. Since it was agreed that the amendments to claim 1 made herein are acceptable, and patentably distinguish over the Tada et al. reference, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Tada et al. Claims 4-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Tada et al. or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Tada et al. in view of Saito et al.

During the telephone interview with the Examiner, it was agreed that neither Tada et al. nor Saito et al., either alone or combined, teach or suggest a dielectric filter having coupling electrodes which share a common and continuous, non-conductive gap, and wherein each coupling electrode extends to at least a first edge of the dielectric

block, as required by independent claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the prior art of record, and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-6 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 and include all of the limitations found therein. Each of these dependent claims include additional limitations which, in combination with the limitations of the claims from which they depend, are neither disclosed nor suggested in the prior art of record. Accordingly, claims 2-6 are likewise patentable.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon has been carefully reviewed. It is believed that this reference, either alone or combined with any other references of record, do no render the pending claims unpatentable.

In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration of the amendments to claim 1, and allowance of the application with claims 1-7 is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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